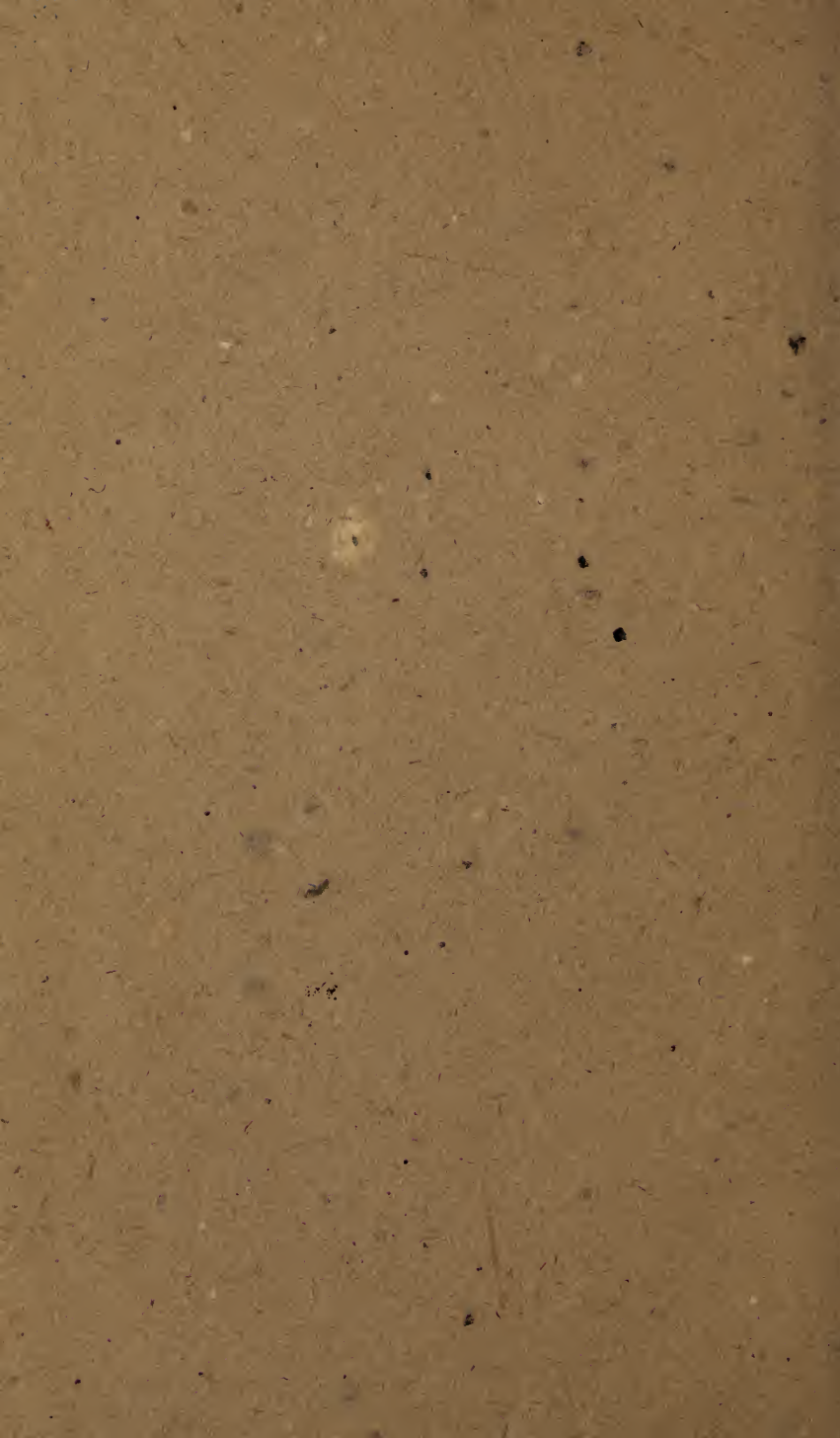


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*Further Illustrations of the Practical Operation of the Scotch System of Management of the Poor.* By W. P. ALISON, M.D., &c., Professor of the Institutes of Medicine in the University of Edinburgh.

[Read before the Statistical Society of London, 15th November, 1841.]

WITHOUT pretending to a profound knowledge of political economy, I think I can easily perceive, that the application of statistics to that science is of equally essential importance, and at the same time demands equal caution and circumspection, as its application to many medical investigations. In an inquiry into the alleged usefulness and importance of any remedy for a known disease, statistical statements extending to the treatment of a very large number of cases, give undoubtedly more positive results than the experience of any individual; but in order to give them value, various cautions are necessary; we must be certain that the terms used in describing these cases, convey exactly the same meaning, and that the statements made in regard to them, either actually embrace, or make sufficient allowance for, all the particulars by which the recovery of patients afflicted with that disease may be affected;—otherwise the collection of great masses of experience, and their exhibition, according to the “numerical method,” *i. e.* in a statistical form, may only serve to extend and perpetuate erroneous conclusions.

We know, for example, that the experience acquired of the efficacy of any one remedy, such as blood-letting, or wine, during an epidemic of any kind of fever, however accurately exhibited in the form of tables, may be wholly inapplicable to another epidemic of the same disease; because under the nosological term, epidemic fever, we necessarily include a great variety of individual cases; and experience shows that the progress of the disease, under any mode of treatment,—the part of the symptoms which becomes predominant, and the mode in which death is produced,—are all extremely different, in the majority of cases occurring in different epidemics, or even in different periods of the same. So also, we cannot apply the statistical results of the experience acquired concerning the efficacy of a remedy at one season of the year to its use at another season, when another influence materially affects the progress of the disease; we cannot apply the statistical results of the use of a remedy among soldiers or sailors, or agricultural labourers, to artizans, or to women and children inhabiting a great town; nay, we cannot trust to the numerical results of the use of a remedy in the hands of one practitioner, as sufficiently securing its subsequent useful application, unless we are certain that we understand the principles by which its use was regulated, and can make these intelligible to other practitioners, of average judgment and discernment.

Some of these difficulties, in regard to the application of statistics to medical science, may be surmounted simply by multiplying experience, and obtaining statistical details, illustrating the efficacy of each of the disturbing forces, which can be supposed to influence the results of the inquiries. But there are facts, in regard to the power of remedies over disease which can hardly be exhibited statistically, of which we can only be assured by observing the actual progress of individual cases, before and after the use of these remedies; and in order to give us the requisite confidence in the truth of these facts, “it is better to *watch* than to *count*.” Accordingly, we may observe generally, that our faith in the efficacy of all remedies is founded, partly on well considered and varied

Letter to Dr. Alison, 24 Mar 49, from Dr. Low



statistical statements, but partly also, on watching the progress of individual cases to which we see them applied.

I apprehend that nearly the same observations should be applied to our judgment in regard to that great and general disease of the body politic, on which I have ventured to express opinions widely different from those which have of late years been prevalent in Scotland; and much more in accordance with those which have suggested themselves to most practical observers in England.

In order that the ground of those opinions may be clearly perceived, and that any application of statistics to this subject may be really useful, it is necessary to be precise in the use of terms, and I shall therefore state shortly in what sense I use those which are most common in these discussions.

When I speak of the management of the *poor*, I use this term as I think it is used in Scripture—not as applicable to the working classes, but to those members of the lower rank of society who are unable to work, or to maintain themselves by work, or to find work; and who, in consequence, have fallen, or are about to fall, into a state of *destitution* and *dependence* on assistance given as one form or another of *charity*. And when I use the word *destitution*, I refer to the condition of persons who have a deficient supply of the necessities of life, whose food is scanty and precarious, who are obliged to part with bed clothes, body clothes, and furniture to procure food; who are inadequately clothed, and generally obliged, at least in towns, to associate together in masses, for the sake of fuel and shelter.

The term *pauperism*, again, is properly applied, as I conceive, only to that part of the community to which a *legal* provision is extended. The meaning of this term is therefore dependent on arbitrary conditions, and as applied to different countries where the laws and usages as to the management of the poor are very different, it may convey very different notions, and greatly mislead our judgment.

When used in a country in which a compulsory provision against destitution exists, and is *uniformly enforced*, the term *pauperism* becomes nearly synonymous with poverty, and even with such destitution as is there found; and in comparing the different parts of that country with another, the statistics of *pauperism* will afford a true index of the degree of destitution, and of suffering from that cause, existing among the people; but if we apply the same mode of inquiry to another country, in which there are no means of uniformly enforcing a legal provision against destitution, it will only tend to mislead us. In reference to such a country, all statistical evidence as to *pauperism*, is almost without value in determining the question how far *destitution* and suffering, and the various national evils thence resulting, are there controlled.

Thus when an Englishman is told that in Scotland the paupers do not average more than 4 per cent. of the population, and in some places do not constitute 1 per cent. instead of nearly 9 per cent. as in England, and that the cost of the poor as proportioned to the population, is not more than 1s. 2d. a-head in the former country, and nearly 6s. a-head in the latter, he is naturally apt to infer that the management of the poor is much better in Scotland than in England; and it was in fact by this apparently simple, but very superficial mode of judging, that the opinion lately so prevalent in England, of the superiority of the Scotch mode of

management was produced; and if the term pauperism expressed the same thing in the two countries; if the condition of the poor admitted to the legal provision, or of those excluded from it, were a given quantity in both, this inference would be correct; but if the object of our inquiry is to know in which country "the greatest happiness of the greatest number" is best provided for, that inference is at once set aside when we find that in England the greater number of the paupers suffer none of the evils of destitution; that on the contrary, to use the words of the secretary of the government commission, which recommended the change in the Poor Law, they are "even in the most pauperized districts, well fed, well lodged, well clothed, happy, and independent;" whereas in Scotland, the legal provision being irregularly and inadequately applied, most of the paupers, and great numbers who are denied aid from the legal provision, live in abject destitution.

This becomes still more obvious, when it is remembered that in Ireland, where, until within these few years there were no paupers at all, (according to the definition of pauperism above given,) the condition of not less than 25 per cent. of the people is so miserable, that they are, more or less, dependent on charity, and "no English pauper in his senses would exchange places," even with many of the occupiers of the land.

To avoid the errors into which we may be thus led by the statistics of *pauperism*, it is necessary for us to take a wider range, and to study the statistics of *destitution*. We ought to trust to nothing but Experience, as teaching in what circumstances, or under what institutions, the sufferings of destitution are most intense and most permanent; but in order to give us the full benefit of experience in a statistical form, on this subject, our inquiries should embrace all the following points:—

1. The *degree of destitution existing* under each system of management—not only the proportion of the population dependent on charitable aid, but the degree of privation and sufferings which they undergo.

2. The *extension of the population*, as proportioned to the demand for labour, on which, of course, the probability of the recurrence or permanence of the evils of destitution depends.

3. The *proportion of the population* which is dependent on assistance from the rest, whether in the form of legal assistance or voluntary charity.

4. The *expense of the provision* made, whether legally or voluntarily, for the relief of destitution, and the manner in which this burden is distributed over the population.

5. The effect of the system adopted on the *character and habits of the people*,—first on the feelings and conduct of the higher ranks, towards the dependent poor, and secondly, on the character and dispositions of the dependent poor themselves, particularly as to improvidence, intemperance, and immorality.

The statistical statements as to these points should, likewise, be accompanied with a general view of the condition, as to other particulars, of each country examined, especially as to the size of estates, the residence or non-residence of proprietors, the size of farms, the proportion of urban and rural population, the proportion of persons engaged in agriculture or manufactures, the extent of education, and the means of religious instruction among the people. But so far as I can learn, very considerable varieties in all these respects are found to be compatible,

either with a comfortable or a very miserable condition of the poor, according as the legal provision for their relief is, or is not, effective.

The inquiries in England, which led to the Poor Law Amendment Act, were chiefly directed to the last three of the points above indicated; because these inquiries were rendered necessary by the unfortunate error which had been committed in the administration of the Poor Law in many parts of England,—the extension of relief, without an adequate test of destitution, and generally *in aid of wages*, to able-bodied men,—*i. e.*, the payment of part of the wages of labour out of the poor-rates, and at the expense of the whole community. This system interfered in various ways with the natural demand for labour; by enabling labourers to obtain employment and live in comfort, where their services were not really required, it undoubtedly gave an unwholesome stimulus to population; and it naturally led to such an extension of the legal relief afforded, as threatened ruin to many of the rate-payers, and consequently, in the end, irremediable destitution and suffering to the paupers themselves.

But it is obvious that in a general investigation, professing to obtain statistical information, and to record the lessons of experience as to the best mode of management of the poor, the *first two* of the heads of inquiry which I have stated above,—that into the *degree of destitution* actually existing under different modes of affording relief, and that into the *extension of population*, as proportioned to the demand for labour, particularly when applied to countries in which different systems have been long in force (points to which the inquiries preceding the change of the law in England hardly adverted),—are the truly essential points, and all others are subordinate.

In the statements which I have made as to the results of the system now in force in Scotland, as compared with that existing on the one hand in England and other countries, where there is a compulsory provision against destitution, and on the other hand in Ireland and other countries, where the system of relief is entirely voluntary, I have kept these points chiefly in view. In reference to them, the simple statistical facts, that in Ireland, where no legal provision against destitution has existed for centuries, the number of the labourers has become so great, in proportion to the demand for labour, that “a man cannot earn subsistence as a day labourer,” (*Nicholls's Three Reports on Ireland*,) and that in the Highlands of Scotland, where the Poor Laws are not acted on at all, “an excess of population exists beyond that for which the country can afford the means of subsistence, or furnish adequate employment,” (*Report of Highland Emigration Committee*, 1841,) are of more value than all other statistical details. But I have likewise endeavoured to show that the fears which are entertained by many as to the injurious effect of a compulsory provision on the proportion of the population dependant upon it, on the capital of a country, and on the character of the population, have no foundation in experience, but are pointedly contradicted by statistical facts.

It is always to be remembered, that the evils which the Poor Law Amendment Act in England was intended to correct, were evils chiefly affecting, as yet, the pecuniary interests of the higher ranks and of the industrious classes, and only threatening, as their ultimate result, to injure the lives and comforts of the poor. That these evils are



not necessarily connected with an efficient legal provision for the poor, appears from the admitted fact, that they hardly existed at all, even before that Act was passed, in the north of England; and from the distinct statement of Mr. Senior, that of many countries in which such a provision has long existed, they have been observed only in England and in the Canton of Berne, and in both resulted merely from the ill-advised practice of paying wages out of poor-rates. When such evils exist, in connection with a compulsory provision against destitution, it is obviously by statistical evidence of the gradual increase of the sums expended on the poor, and of the number of able-bodied paupers, in proportion to the resources and numbers of the population, that they can be illustrated and exposed. But in Scotland, as in Ireland and other countries, where there is no efficient legal provision, the evils which require to be ascertained and statistically exposed, are the evils of poverty and destitution themselves,—the privations and sufferings, the diseases (especially the epidemic diseases) and mortality of the people,—the accumulation of misery in particular towns or districts where such relief as is afforded may be procured,—and most of all, the extension of the population—and the degree in which it presses on the demand for labour and means of subsistence at home, and overflows into adjoining countries.

And in this case, just as in the case of medical investigations, in order to have perfectly satisfactory results, we must combine statistical inquiries with careful observation of individual facts, and shall find them mutually to elucidate each other.

The main object of the statements which I have repeatedly made on this subject, is to show that in a complex and advanced state of society, where there is no effective legal provision for the poor, it is always practically found that there is much unrelieved or imperfectly relieved destitution; that the natural effect of this is, *not prudence, but degradation*, and the natural effect of degradation is improvidence, recklessness, and thereby a morbid increase of population; so that in such a country, not only the sufferings of the poor, but ultimately *the numbers of the suffering poor*, become much greater than they have ever been found in those countries where an effective legal provision, even if injudiciously administered, exists.

This last point may be statistically ascertained; but the conclusion drawn from it is greatly strengthened by other observations, the result of which cannot so easily be exhibited in numbers. Such observations show that voluntary relief, in a complex state of society, is always deficient in the great requisites—*first, of uniformity and adequacy of amount*, as proportioned to the sufferings of those who require it, and to the resources of those who grant it; and *secondly, of security against abuse*, which can be obtained only by constant inspection of the conduct of those relieved. And again, such observations enable us to assign two reasons for the ultimately excessive population of districts where there is no effective legal provision:—1st. That in such districts nobody's pecuniary interest is directly or immediately injured by incipient redundancy of population, and therefore nobody is at pains to obstruct it in its early stage; and 2nd. That in such districts numerous families are reared in penury and degradation, without artificial wants or habits of comfort, and when they come to adult age, are very generally found to be wholly beyond the influence of any preventive checks on population.

Such observations point out, likewise, the true mode of applying statistical information to the practical question,—what restrictions, or retrenchments, on the legal relief afforded against destitution are prudent, and likely to be permanently useful, and what are excessive and injurious? The only general rule I believe to be, that all such restrictions as tend practically to *degrade the poor*, to escape which they will *lower their habits*, and bring up their families in filth and penury, however temporarily economical, will be ultimately injurious.

In a former paper I have brought forward a number of facts to prove, that while *pauperism* and the *legal cost* of the poor have been kept down in Scotland, much below what we find in England or in other countries, where an effective legal provision exists, *destitution* has made rapid progress; and the *condition* of the poor in Scotland is not only no subject of gratulation, but one of deep regret and alarm, to every one who is really at pains to study it. And I can now refer to a very considerable number of documents, made public since that paper was published, which fully confirm my statements,—*first*, as to the amount of existing destitution in Scotland, the inadequacy of the relief given, and of all other existing resources, in averting much suffering and consequent degradation from large numbers of the poor who are admitted to the legal provision; *secondly*, the number of cases, even of extreme destitution, in which all parochial relief is refused; *thirdly*, the excessive burden, of relief to the misery surrounding them, which is thus laid on the industrious classes of society; *fourthly*, the accumulation of destitution in the towns, which under a different system of management finds adequate relief in country districts; and *lastly*, the general redundancy of the population, greatest in districts where the existing Poor Laws are not enforced, and where the legal relief given is admitted to be illusory; and, in connection with this, the extension of epidemic disease.

In proof of all these points, I may refer to the *Plea of the Poor of Scotland, for an Inquiry into their Condition*, by the Rev. Dr. Burns, of Paisley; (an author who has previously written on the subject of pauperism in Scotland, and is allowed on all hands to be practically well informed in regard to it;) to the facts contained in the Rev. Mr. Lewis's *State of St. David's Parish, Dundee*; those contained in the *Remarks on the Circumstances and Claims of the Indigent Poor, and the Inadequacy of the present System of Parochial Relief in Scotland*, by Charles Scott, Esq., Session Clerk at Peterhead. I may refer to the very important *Police Return*, by Captain Miller, at Glasgow, of the circumstances of 1,038 destitute families visited by himself, and partially relieved there last winter; to the *Memorandum on certain Results arising out of the Bills of Mortality of the City of Glasgow, and which bear on the Condition and Management of the Poor*, lately published by direction of the Town Council of Glasgow; to the *Report on the Local Census of Lanarkshire*, by Alexander Watt, Esq., just published; and to the *Reports on the Sanatory Condition of various Towns in Scotland*, lately drawn up under the direction of the Poor Law Commissioners; particularly to that on *Glasgow*, by Mr. Baird; on *Ayr*, by Dr. Sym; on *Dumfries*, by Dr. M'Lellan; on *Musselburgh*, by Dr. Stevenson; on *Lanark*, by Mr. Gibson. I may refer to the proofs of extreme destitution, and enormously redundant and still increasing population, (by no means solely referable) to the change of the duties on kelp, but accumu-



lating in excessive numbers on the sea coasts, where a precarious employment was to be found,) contained in the evidence taken by the Committee of the House of Commons on emigration from Scotland. But the most satisfactory proofs I can give of the truth of the above representations as to the destitution in Scotland are the facts, that *the town councils of thirteen of the principal towns in Scotland*, including Edinburgh, Glasgow, Paisley, Greenock, Ayr, Perth, Dundee, and Aberdeen, after making some inquiry into the destitute condition of their poor, and the inadequacy of the existing means for their relief, *have petitioned Government*, almost all unanimously, *for an official inquiry*, with a view to some modification and a more uniform enforcement of the law; and that *the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland* after full and repeated discussion of the subject, adopted by a very large majority a report expressing their "*belief that the statements as to the destitution and sufferings of a large portion of the people were but too true*,"—their feeling that it could not be the duty of the church to attempt to "throw a veil over the sufferings of the people," and therefore their *approbation of the proposal of an official and authoritative inquiry into the subject*.

To the same purpose, in their *Pastoral Address*, published in July, 1841, the General Assembly thus express themselves:—"The state of the poor in Scotland, *too frequently suffering under privations such as it could scarcely be conceived possible that a Christian country could tolerate, or that human nature could endure*,—exposed to the ravages of disease and the contamination of vice and temptation to crime, hard, in their circumstances, to be resisted,—is forcing itself upon the notice of the country." They add, that although means have been partially adopted for the remedy of these social grievances, yet these have been "so inadequate as to be *matter of reproach and blame to the church and to the country*."

I apprehend it will hardly now be denied that the system of management of the poor now in force in Scotland has been singularly unsuccessful, either in relieving them from general and intense suffering, or in teaching or enabling them to provide against such suffering by their own prudence or exertions. But as it is of essential importance to all discussions on this subject that the results of this system should be brought fairly before the public in a statistical form, I shall adduce some farther statistical facts, in addition to those contained in my previous paper,\* partly taken from recent publications little known in England, and partly from documents not yet published, in illustration of the positions I have laid down.

I. As to the state of destitution and suffering among the poor who are admitted on the parish rolls, implying obviously that the resources, in aid of which the parochial allowances are granted, are very often perfectly illusory, and that those allowances are inadequate to preserve those receiving them from abject misery and degradation, I have formerly given copious illustrations in Edinburgh and other places; and shall now show that a similar or even worse state of things exists in the larger town of Glasgow, and in such smaller towns as Inverness and Peterhead.

Of the 1038 "*cases of utter destitution*, where the extent of wretchedness endured forced itself on the sympathy of all who witnessed it," reported on by Captain Miller, at Glasgow, 406 had parochial relief

\* See Journal of the Stat. Society of London, for October, 1840; vol. iii. p. 211.

(Abstract of Return, p. 18); but the parochial relief granted "is wholly inadequate to do more than pay the weekly rent of their miserable dwellings" (p. 19). Take, for example, the case, which all must admit to be one deserving of sympathy and assistance, the case of widows with young children. I make out from the first nine pages of this report a list of 20 widows, with, in all, 59 children under 10 years of age dependent on them, three of them having fever in their families, two others themselves ill, and two having children dying; the whole parochial assistance given to *all these families* is 3*l.* 14*s.* per month, averaging 3*s.* 8*d.* a-month, or not quite 11*d.* a-week, to each family. Any one who has attended to the subject must know, that the earnings of these widows, each burdened, on an average, with three young helpless children, must be very scanty; and farther, at the time when visited and in the receipt of this allowance, they appear to have been almost all out of work, and the whole weekly earnings of the 20 families are not stated at more than 6*s.* It may easily be conceived that the condition of these families as to lodging, clothing, or furniture, is stated as equally miserable as that of those who have no legal relief at all; many are accordingly described as having no bedding, no blankets, very little clothing, and their children almost naked; and if it be, as I maintain, a curse to a country to have numerous families reared in it without any notions of comfort, it may be judged from what I have stated whether this curse is likely to be averted by the relief here given.

Again, taking the first 23 aged and disabled women who are here recorded as receiving this parochial relief, we find that they have 4*l.* 6*s.* divided among them in a month, which amounts to rather less than 3*s.* 9*d.* a-month—*i. e.* rather less than three halfpence a-day—for each; and the whole earnings of the 23 are stated at only 6*s.* a-week, which sum is divided among 5 of them, leaving 18 of the 23 with no ostensible income but the three halfpence a-day for lodging, food, fuel, and clothing.

It is not here stated, and indeed can often hardly be ascertained, what assistance these persons receive from relations or friends, farther than that almost all of them are stated to have no children alive; but any one who knows the destitute inhabitants of a large town, will at once admit that in many of the cases thus taken indiscriminately, there will be no such assistance at all; and that the miserable state of destitution as to lodging, clothing, and furniture, described in this report, is, in the case of many, the necessary and unavoidable result of their misfortunes and infirmities; admitting, in the absence of more efficient legal relief, only of such precarious and variable alleviation as they can obtain by one form or another of mendicity.

I shall only observe as to these facts, that while the inadequate provision for the aged and disabled labourers is the part of the system most repugnant to the feelings of humanity and the precepts of Christianity, the inadequate provision for the families of widows and disabled labourers is, in a political view, still more injurious, because it poisons one of the sources of national prosperity, and leads naturally to a perpetuation of the same evils.

Mr. Scott, in his account of the pauperism at Peterhead, (a town hitherto unassessed,) gives more precise details as to all the sources of income which persons so circumstanced can command,—earnings,

parochial assistance, and the proceeds of regulated voluntary charity, and of mendicity; and these details are the more important, as I have no doubt, from what I have learned in other quarters, that he is correct in stating the facts he has collected in regard to the condition of the poor, and the sums expended for their behoof in Peterhead, as “representing, more or less accurately, the case of many among the middling or smaller towns in Scotland.”

The number of individuals supplied from the parochial funds at Peterhead is 371, rather less than five per cent. of the population, (which is about 8,000, but not comprising, as will afterwards appear, the whole of the destitute poor,) and the sum expended on paupers, from the parish funds, in 1840, was “361*l.* 2*s.* 8½*d.*, from which, deducting 20*l.* 6*s.* 9*d.* paid to strangers, and 6*l.* 11*s.* 6*d.* paid for coffins, there remains 334*l.* 4*s.* 5½*d.*,” which gives rather more than a halfpenny a-day to each individual.

The funds which the paupers can command, and in aid of which these allowances are made, are thus stated by Mr. Scott:—

	£.	s.	d.
Proceeds of the labour of the paupers. . . . .	559	9	0
Allowances received from various charitable societies . . . . .	115	15	6
	£675	4	6
From this sum there has to be deducted as payment of rents (there being no poor-house) . . . . .	384	3	8
Leaving . . . . .	£291	0	10

which, added to the 334*l.* 4*s.* 5½*d.* furnished by the parish, gives 625*l.* 5*s.* 3½*d.*,—the whole ostensible income of 371 persons, whose average income is thus raised to 1*l.* 13*s.* 9*d.* a-year, or about one penny and ½ per day for each person, for the purchase of food, fuel, clothing, and all other comforts.

A considerable number of the paupers, however, follow the practice of begging, and are even licensed to do so, on Fridays only; and there are other modes of mendicity regularly practised, the whole proceeds of which Mr. Scott estimates at 500*l.* a-year, thus apparently making up the average income of the paupers to nearly 2*d.* a-day for each. But a considerable portion of this sum, from his own account, goes to persons who are dependent on charity, indeed, but not on the parochial lists; and the portion going to the paupers is, of course, very irregularly distributed, as well as expended; so that the income of many, and especially of the more deserving, of the paupers, after payment of house rent, must be much less than 2*d.* a-day, probably hardly exceeding the 1½*d.* a-day of ostensible income.

It is usually said that the allowances to paupers in Scotland are kept so low, in order to stimulate the exertions of their relatives; but it appears quite distinctly, from Mr. Scott’s statement at Peterhead,—and I am confident it will be found, on inquiry, to be very generally true, at least in the larger towns,—that in this respect the system is peculiarly unsuccessful. The cases on the roll, he says, have been individually reviewed with this view, and except in a very few instances, “the effect of attempting to enforce the claim on relatives for the support of paupers, would only be to reduce industrious individuals and families, themselves



struggling to obtain an independent livelihood, to the condition of paupers, and thus ultimately to increase the number and claims of the poor," (p. 28) ; which shows that the inadequacy of the provision against beggary and destitution, does not prevent the relatives of the poor, in Scotland more than in Ireland, from forming other connexions and contracting other obligations.

While such is the usual income, from all sources, without exception, of nearly five per cent. of the population, it is to be observed that the wages of labour at Peterhead are not much lower than the average in England, Mr. Scott stated to me that the wages of a labourer there are from 8s. to 10s. a-week, and those of an artisan from 12s. to 14s.; and that those artisans who are necessarily unemployed during part of the year, such as masons, have higher wages.

It appears from a report drawn up by Mr. Anderson, of Inverness, on the sanatory condition of that town, (which was submitted to the Poor Law Commissioners, but not published by them,) that the condition of the paupers there is at least as bad as at Peterhead. The allowances seldom exceed 2*l.*, and more generally are only 1*l.* a-year, to each person. "But for the known charity and liberality of their poor neighbours, a little easier in circumstances than themselves, their situation would often be most deplorable. As it is, *they can only be said to exist, certainly not to enjoy any of the comforts of life*; and from the want of cleanliness in their persons and dwellings, they are very seldom visited at their own abodes by their betters." This appeared, after the strictest inquiry, to be the condition of 470 persons, who could not be excluded from the list of permanent paupers, "very many of them old domestic servants, whose wages were never sufficient to let them have a fund for their latter day's support;" and Mr. Anderson expresses an opinion that the list of permanent paupers ought to have contained at least 100 more, all "living in a state of the greatest destitution." While this is the permanent condition of nearly 600 people in a population of 16,000, *i. e.* of nearly four per cent. of the population, and a still greater number are dependent on occasional charitable assistance, it is to be observed, that "there are no causes in the trade or commerce of Inverness strongly operating to produce an undue increase of poor. There are no manufactures or special trade carried on to any considerable extent, subjecting the population to sudden impulses or occasional distress from want of employment. The lower orders consist mainly of artificers and labourers dependent on the rural prosperity of the neighbourhood and the moderate commercial traffic of the town; and it is believed that pauperism increases much more slowly in such a population than in the manufacturing districts."

I would here merely ask, Does not the *actual condition* of the aged and disabled poor in any English town, of *similar character*, where so much larger allowances have been granted for centuries, strongly contrast with that now described; and if so, what foundation is there for the assertion, which has found so much favour in Scotland, that "the more you do for the poor, the more you contribute to their increase?"

I have been favoured by Mr. D. W. Stewart, at Hillside, near Lockerby, with a valuable paper, containing a detailed statement of the circumstances of the paupers, permanent and occasional, of that much smaller town, likewise unassessed, but in which the affairs of the poor

appear to be carefully superintended,—the allowances to them, certainly much better than in most of the unassessed districts, and the assistance obtained from relatives of the poor, small as it is, certainly much more than is to be procured from that source in any of the larger towns,—where the mortality among children is so much greater, and the sense of religious or moral obligation (particularly in those brought up in abject destitution) is less effective. The state of things here described I would regard as a very favourable specimen of the working of the present system in Scotland, such a specimen as is only seen where there are humane resident heritors, and no great accumulation of poverty; yet the inadequacy of all the resources allowed to the destitute poor is very apparent.

“The village or small post town in question contains a population of between 1,400 and 1,500, the landward part of the same parish has about 800; making, in all, upwards of 2,200.

“It is situated in a district of country where the agricultural improvements of the last 60 years are said to be as great and as apparent in the altered aspect of things as in any other county in Scotland.

“The families and individuals, of which some account is to be given, received, in the course of last year, distribution of public relief from the following:—

“ From the Kirk Session (nearly altogether in money) within a few shillings of . . . . .	£100
From a Female Benevolent Society, in money, clothes, and coals, about . . . . .	24
From a soup kitchen, maintained for four or five weeks at an expense of about . . . . .	12
A distribution of meal gratuitously (from one donor) about . . . . .	10
Ditto of meal, being sold at 1s. per stone, when worth 2s. 6d., from the same . . . . .	12
Total . . . . .	£158

“Of 123 families who received aid from the above funds, there are 63 whose cases form the subject of the subjoined analysis, and they are chosen for this purpose because they are in the habit of receiving, year after year, a nearly similar amount of relief.

“*Account of 63 indigent persons receiving regular aid from the Session or Female Society, and occasionally from other funds raised by subscription in the parish.*

#### “Description of Persons.

“26 widows, 12 of whom have 22 children dependent on them.  
18 single (unmarried women) 2 have 3 children dependent on them.  
15 men, 3 of whom have 8 children dependent on them.  
4 orphans.

63 individuals, with 33 children dependent on them (making in all 96 regular paupers,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the population).

“These 33 children are such as are under 12 or 13 years of age, and are resident with their poor parents; when they are above that age, and able for work, they are generally included under the other classification of such as are able to assist their parents.

“The respective ages of the 63 are as follows:—

“ 7 between 80 and 90.		
12	„	70 and 80.
21	„	60 and 70.
9	„	50 and 60.
3	„	40 and 50.
1	„	30 and 40.
1	„	20 and 30.
1	„	15 and 20.

“Their ability to work is also thus analysed:—

- “ 30 quite unable for work, from old age, infirmity, or disease.
- 21 able for a little work, spinning, knitting, breaking stones, &c.
- 12 able for work.

“Of the 21 who are marked as able for a little work, it would be difficult to make any accurate estimate of their earnings, as there has to be taken into account, not only their partial inability for exertion, from old age or infirmity, but also the inadequate and irregular supply of that species of labour to which they are necessarily confined. Taking these circumstances into account, and calculating from some individual cases of old women who get a little spinning and knitting, it is supposed that the 14 women thus classified above may not average above 6*d.* or 8*d.* a-week, or 25*s.* to 30*s.* in the year each.

“Seven widows and five single women are marked above as able for work. The seven widows and two of the single women have young children, generally more than one, dependent on them; the remaining three single women are idle from some temporary cause.

“*Assistance from Relatives.*

- “ 18 widows . . . Receive some assistance,—5 from one daughter alone; 4 from one son alone; 1 from a grandson; 1 from a sister, a farmer's wife; 1 from a brother, a farmer; 6 from two or three sons and daughters.
- 8 ditto . . . . Get no assistance.
- 5 single women . . Receive assistance,—3 from children, 2 from other relatives.
- 13 ditto . . . . Receive none.
- 7 men . . . . Receive assistance,—4 from one daughter alone, 2 from one son alone, and 1 from two children.
- 7 ditto . . . . Receive no assistance.

“In all (11 from one daughter each, 7 from one son each, 7 from more than 2 children, 5 from other relatives), 30 assisted and 29 unassisted.

“Among those who are unassisted, 2 or 3 only are marked as having children, able, but refusing to give any aid to their parents. The amount of assistance which the 30 receive is not great; a consideration of the common earnings of a workwoman, as stated above, will show her inability, even in the best case, to provide for an aged parent, and undoubtedly it is only by great self-denial they are enabled to do so; when hired at service their wages do not average above from 4*l.* to 5*l.* a-year, and yet they almost universally pay house-rent for their aged or disabled parents. It is scarcely possible for them to do more, for, as servants, they must keep themselves decently clothed. In many of the above cases, however, they will be found to be even worse circumstanced than in service; for either from not being hired, or in order to wait personally on their parent, they remain at home with them, and are thus reduced to a very scanty income from field-work, &c., probably not more than 5*l.* or 6*l.* a-year. The assistance received from sons is not so certain, nor is it



so liberal in proportion to their means, as that from daughters; paying the house-rent is, in several cases, the extent of this assistance.

*“Annual Allowances.”*

“1 of them receives between 7 <i>l.</i> and 8 <i>l.</i>	This is a man quite disabled, with a wife and 5 young children, without assistance from relatives.
1 between . . . . . 4 <i>l.</i> and 5 <i>l.</i>	A woman, with a young child, quite disabled and without assistance from relatives.
9 between . . . . . 3 <i>l.</i> and 4 <i>l.</i>	5 of these are quite disabled, 2 able for a very little, and 2 able for work; but 1 with 2 young children, the other with 4 young children. Both of these latter are without assistance from relatives; 5 of the others get some small assistance.
10 between . . . . . 2 <i>l.</i> and 3 <i>l.</i>	6 of whom are quite disabled, and 4 able only for a little; 6 of the 10 are assisted a little by their relatives.
16 between . . . . . 1 <i>l.</i> and 2 <i>l.</i>	Of these 38, 10 are quite disabled, 14 are able for a little only, 7 have received for temporary illness only, 7 are women, able, but with young children; 15 get a little assistance from members of their family, 23 get none.
And 22 between . . . . . 4 <i>s.</i> and 1 <i>l.</i>	
4 between . . . . . 5 <i>l.</i> and 6 <i>l.</i>	These are orphans, boarded by the Session at about 2 <i>s.</i> a-week.

“About three-fourths of these allowances are from the Session, the other one-fourth from other sources. In order the better to appreciate the inadequacy of such allowances, (individual cases of which, as examples, will be afterwards adverted to,) I have endeavoured to make some approximation to a fair statement of the annual necessary expenditure of a labouring man and his family.”

Mr. Stewart then enters into a circumstantial detail of the average expenditure of a labourer and his family, which he recapitulates as follows, taking two rates of greater and less comfort :—first, considering him singly—

	Average of the higher Rate. per Annum. £. s. d.	Average of the lower Rate. per Annum. £. s. d.
“House rent . . . . .	1 15 0	1 5 0
Food . . . . .	4 15 0	3 18 0
Fuel . . . . .	1 14 8	1 6 0
Clothes . . . . .	2 10 0	2 0 0
Various items . . . . .	0 15 0	0 8 0
	<hr/> 11 9 8	<hr/> 8 17 0

‘In a woman’s expense deduct the following :—

	£. s. d.		£. s. d.
“Less for food . . . . .	1 14 8		
Clothes . . . . .	0 15 0		
	<hr/> 2 9 8		<hr/> 2 9 8
	<hr/> 9 0 0		<hr/> 6 7 4

“In the case of families, we have to make the following proportionate additions, supposing the family to consist of a man, his wife, and three young children :—

	Higher Rate.			Lower Rate.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
"For the man as above . . . . .	11	9	8	8	17	0
Food and clothing for wife at same rate	4	15	0	3	9	0
Ditto for children . . . . .	9	8	0	6	4	0
Additional house rent . . . . .	0	15	0	0	15	0
Ditto fuel and other items . . . . .	1	15	0	0	15	0
	28	2	8	20	0	0

"My view in estimating this standard of living is, of course, to compare its expense with the allowances to the destitute, which are customary here and through the greater part of Scotland.

"To recur to the case of the single man and of the single woman—of the latter of whom, either widows or unmarried, a great portion of our poor consist,—we find that in the lower standard of living the various articles of weekly expense will, for the man, amount to 3s. 5d., for the woman to 2s. 5d.; or, by the year, to 8*l.* 17s. and 6*l.* 7s. 4d. respectively.

"Thus, then, it appears that to meet an expenditure of 2s. 5d. a-week, which would no more than suffice to keep them in a manner of living customary among the lower class of the working population, such destitute women, *without ability to work and without assistance from relatives*, are in the habit of receiving from public resources no more than one half of that amount, or about 1s. 2d. or 1s. 3d. per week.

"A second class of destitute women are such as are quite disabled from work, but who get a little assistance from sons, or more frequently from daughters, in circumstances which were before described; it was there stated that the average amount of that assistance might be equal to, or little more than equal to, the payment of the house rent, viz., 25s. or 30s. a-year. The proportionate public allowances to this class, as compared with the first, would show that the same view is entertained of the amount of that assistance by the distributors of public relief; for, while the first class receive on an average about 1s. 3d. a-week, this second class have only on an average 9d. or 10d., or about 25s. a-year less than the first.

"The same remark is applicable to a third class, viz., that of single women, (or widows without children,) who are able for a very little work, but who have no assistance from relatives. This class on an average receive from 8d. to 9d. a-week, agreeing with the supposition that their average earnings may not exceed 30s. a-year.

"The cases of destitute old men are comparatively few; the allowances appear to be proportionately small.

"Now the next question that arises is, what is the effect of making these allowances so small? What is the effect in the case of the utterly destitute old woman, of giving her a weekly provision of only 1s. 3d. a-week, while an estimate of 2s. 5d. would appear barely sufficient to afford her a living of the most ordinary standard of comfort? How will she curtail her expenditure down to this measure? It is evident that it can only be done by her being subjected to the pressure of the most meagre and pinching penury. Food, fuel, and clothing must all be reduced in the most miserable proportions; we have only to look at what we are supposing her to be reduced from: 2s. 5d. gives a habitation of the humblest order (at 25s. a-year, or 6d. a-week)—*this*

item of her expense cannot be reduced ; it gives (at 10*d.* a-week) a sufficiency of only the most *homely* food, porridge and potatoes, the larger portion being of the latter as the cheapest, with a little milk added. At 25*s.* a-year or 6*d.* a-week, it supplies clothes of the most ordinary texture, no more than sufficient for warmth and such decency of appearance as may induce to attendance at church ; it gives fuel at 6*d.* a-week on an average through the year, no more than enough to keep a fire burning constantly only in winter ; and for what, then, will *half* of this weekly expense suffice ? and in what condition in reality are these poor pensioners found ?

“ It is true that the hand of private charity does occasionally interfere ; but this may be at a point of destitution even worse than this ; and that such cases must frequently occur is too manifest.

“ Not unfrequently both the fire and the clothes are worn to so low an ebb, that the poor tenant of a cheerless hovel has betaken herself to bed while yet day, to amass around her the insufficient body-clothes and single worn blanket, as some defence against the cold.

“ Private relief is chiefly administered in such exigencies, and *often coming only from near neighbours who have but a bare sufficiency for themselves*, it is only very limited in amount, and such as will merely meet the most pressing wants. Many of these paupers are not addicted to any species of begging, taking this chance of being thus noticed and relieved by neighbours in any extreme exigency. Others are less scrupulous and make various applications in the neighbourhood ; and something of relief is undoubtedly gained by both in either of these ways, but, being given only in relief of pressing want, it does not amount to very much in all : I should say 2*d.* or 3*d.* a-week might be a near approach to the value of such relief on an average.

“ There are seasons when begging is much more urgent and prevalent, and when the amount of relief obtained in this way may be greater : there are seasons of scarcity and high prices ; but it is to be observed, that to such the above estimates are not applicable, they being calculated on the average prices. But, during the last three years meal has been one-fourth higher, and potatoes no less than double the usual price. There has been no augmentation of the Session’s allowances, but, from public subscriptions and other sources, an additional aid in soup, or meal, or coals, of the value of from 6*s.* to 8*s.* in the year, has been given to each of the poor. This cannot have been adequate to meet the increased price of provisions, and the urgency of their applications to individuals has been, therefore, greater than usual.”

I hope I may be excused for adding here a few sentences from the general reflections with which Mr. Stewart concludes his Analysis of the Pauperism of his neighbourhood.

“ The remark may here be made,—that too much being left for private charity to do, is in itself a cause of its non-efficiency in endeavouring to confer upon the poor anything but the mere means of subsistence, a mode of subsistence which seems a disgrace to a Christian country.

“ Public charity does not fulfil its office ; it leaves many crying for bread, and it drags down private charity along with it ; the pitch of its philanthropy is also lowered, for the standard of all such sentiments is immeasurably influenced by habit.



“There have been some nations, not in the infancy of civilization, who have been so blinded by degraded notions of expediency, that they had the practice of putting the old people among them to death, that they might be no longer a burden on their relatives or on society; thus have they submitted the surer instincts of affection and humanity to some false prejudices of reason; and habit would so confirm this usage, that the feelings would no longer be shocked.

“Now, however custom may have prejudiced us, and the naming of religion itself often may have appeared to us to sanctify most of our institutions, is it a far-fetched analogy to pass from the usage above referred to, to our own practice in the treatment of the poor, wherein we grudgingly dole out to those who are cast helpless on society, through old age or infirmity, an allowance adequate only to the most miserable subsistence?”

It will be observed, that the average allowance to each regular pauper in the parish to which this account applies, and where the relief given appears, on examination, so inadequate, is not less than 1*l.* 5*s.* per annum; and it will be remembered, that throughout the whole four northern Synods of Scotland, the average allowance granted is only 9*s.* 4*d.* per annum, *i. e.* hardly more than one-third of that now considered; and that in several parishes in the north, the *highest* amount given is stated in the Report to the General Assembly in 1839, at 6*s.*, or even at 4*s.* per annum. Indeed, the allowances to aged and disabled persons stated by Mr. Stewart are somewhat above those now granted to such paupers in the city of Edinburgh; which have been very generally *lowered* since the time when the answers to queries which I brought forward in my paper last year, were obtained; and now hardly do more than, as stated by Captain Miller at Glasgow, pay the house-rents of those who receive them.

The consequence of this is, that while police regulations exist, and are sometimes strictly enforced against public begging, these regulations are practically found, as Mr. Sadler expresses it, “infinitely too cruel to be generally effective,” their most certain effect being only to add fraud to begging. The following quotation from the Report of the House of Refuge in Edinburgh for the present year, illustrates this point:—“The number of beggars in Edinburgh is frequently brought forward as a proof of inefficiency on the part of the House of Refuge. But, by its rules, it cannot afford an asylum to persons whose parochial claims are acknowledged,” (*i. e.* unless they are sent in as boarders, paid for by their parishes). “Very many of these are beggars, driven by absolute necessity to break the law. The parochial aid which these poor creatures receive is so inadequate to maintain existence, that, in the too frequent absence of employment, they *must* beg. How can a poor widow, with three or four small children, provide food, fuel, clothing, and lodging, on eighteen pence or possibly twenty-one pence per week? It is matter of necessity. They must beg or starve. With such cases (*and they form a large class*) the House of Refuge cannot alas! interfere,” further than occasionally and to a very limited extent.—(Report for 1841, p. 18.)

It has been recently stated, by defenders of the present system in Scotland, that the alleged disparity between the allowances granted to paupers in England and Scotland “*almost disappears on examination* ;”

and I have, therefore, been anxious to produce authentic documents, from which those who are accustomed to the English out-door allowances and the other resources of English paupers, can judge how far this assertion is well-founded.

II. But I have repeatedly stated, that we shall have very imperfect notions of the sufferings of the poor in Scotland, if we confine our views to the cases of those who are admitted to parochial assistance; and I must add here some details as to the cases of persons in utter destitution, who receive no relief at all from any parochial funds; the main cause of their exclusion being, as I believe, that peculiarity in the present law, by which no appeal is allowed, from the decisions of the Kirk Sessions and Managers of the Poor, to any attainable Court of Review.

Of the 1038 cases of destitution in Glasgow, reported on by Captain Miller, I have already said that only 406 had parochial relief; but it is distinctly stated that no less than 1016 had a legal settlement there. Thus it appears that 610 persons, many of them heads of families, domiciled in Glasgow and in utter "destitution, exciting the sympathy of all who witnessed it," are excluded from any parochial relief. As a specimen of the condition of those persons, in the two first pages of his Report I find the names of 22 widows of this class, with 42 children under 10 years of age; and the whole weekly earnings of these widows, forming the only ostensible income of 64 persons, are stated at 1*l* 7*s*. not fifteen-pence a-week to each family, and not five-pence a-week to each individual, from which the whole necessities of life (including lodging) are to be provided.

Of the great *excess* of the destitution and suffering in Scotland, over the pauperism that appears on the rolls of the parishes, I formerly gave some statistical illustrations, and all the documents I have since met with, forcibly illustrate the same point. Thus, Mr. Stewart states that at Lockerby:—

"Besides the list of 63 families analysed above, there is another list of 60 families who in the same year had oatmeal sold or given to them at the rate of 1*s*. per stone, when the current price was 2*s*. 4*d*. per stone, (of 14 lbs.) This was from the same donor, and at the same time with the gratuitous distribution of meal to the session poor; and as this latter list included only such as were not in the habit of receiving any charitable assistance, it was thought better, as less interfering with a feeling of independence, to offer them so much at this low price, rather than to give them a smaller quantity gratuitously." "The principle on which it was bestowed, was the conviction that these families were suffering more or less from *destitution*. That this destitution in most of the cases must have been *very grievous* as compared with the ordinary standard of the common labourer's state of comfort, was too obvious, from the circumstances of the season as well as of the individual cases. They were all families who in the best seasons could be but scantily provided; some of them partially disabled by old age or infirmity; some of them tradesmen, at all times in very limited employment, partly from being superseded by later, better trained, and more expert hands; a few of them suffering from habits of intemperance; the greater portion of them with young families, and a considerable number with one or more of a family a little imbecile or invalids. While in ordinary times it is quite certain that such families can be supported only in a very scanty manner, it is evident that often, whether from individual

misfortune, or from general dearth and want of work, having had at no time any superfluity of the means of subsistence, but on the contrary a continual scantiness,—they must be brought within the savage domain of actual *want*.”

“From the state of the funds at Peterhead,” says Mr. Scott, “parties applying for assistance are now seldom relieved, until their necessities are such, that they must be admitted as regular pensioners.” “It may easily be shown that many families and individuals requiring public or private aid for procuring the first necessities of life, receive *no aid from the funds under the management of the Kirk Session*.” (Remarks, &c., p. 25.) And to the same purpose, Mr. Anderson states at Inverness, that “the inadequacy of the pittances granted by the Kirk Session has called forth at different times various benevolent schemes, such as a public soup kitchen, and a Ladies’ District Visiting Society, but that none of these excellent institutions dependent on voluntary contributions, have (with the exception of the dispensary) maintained a footing for more than a few years, or been able to supply the exigencies of an increasing pauper population. The Ladies’ District Visiting Society gave relief for about three years to from 800 to 1000 poor persons in the town of Inverness alone, exclusive of the land-ward part of the parish, and at times had 1200 on their list,” out of a population, with town and parish, of about 16,000; although the regular paupers (who, as Mr. Anderson thinks, ought to be nearly 600) have been hitherto kept under 500.

I formerly illustrated at some length the connection of extensive destitution in large towns with contagious fever, not by any means as its sole cause, but as one which favours its extension so powerfully, that its presence may always be suspected when fever is found peculiarly and repeatedly prevalent. Some farther illustrations on this subject contributed from various towns, are contained in the Appendix to the Second Report of the Association for Enquiry into Pauperism in Scotland; and as the principle which I have stated has not been disputed by any medical authority, I need not enter again on the evidence of it, but shall add some Tables illustrating the extent to which fever has lately prevailed, and still prevails, in the great towns of Scotland, contrasting remarkably with the amount of fever in the English towns, where the provision against destitution is so much more effective.

In the year 1838, fever prevailed in England much more extensively than in any previous or succeeding year during the present century; and I formerly gave reasons for thinking that the number of cases reported as typhus in the English registers of mortality, is somewhat above the reality. The proportion of deaths from fever to the whole mortality in that year in the following towns, appears from the Reports of the Registrar-General to have been as follows:—

In London . . . .	7·7 per cent.
,, Manchester . . . .	7·7 „
,, Liverpool . . . .	6·9 „
,, Birmingham . . . .	5 „
,, Leeds . . . .	3·6 „

(*Second Report of Registrar General in England.*)

But in Glasgow the mortality from fever, on *an average of seven years*, ending in 1840, is of the whole mortality, 11·8 per cent.



In the year 1837 it was 20·4 per cent.

In the year 1840 it was 13·93 per cent.

(Memorandum published by order of the Glasgow Town Council,  
29th March, 1841.)

In Dundee on an average of seven years,

before 1839 it was 10·9 per cent of the whole mortality.

and in 1836 it was 15 per cent.

The following tables show how contagious fever holds its ground in Edinburgh and Glasgow; and I am sorry to add that at this moment (August, 1841) it is more prevalent in Edinburgh than I have ever known it before at this season of the year.

*Statement of Weekly Admissions and Deaths in the Fever House of Glasgow, during the Year 1840.*

Admitted.		Died.	Admitted.		Died.
1st week of said year,	34	2	29th week of said year,	71	4
2d	61	8	30th	77	13
3d	54	7	31st	83	10
4th	62	6	32d	62	6
5th	68	7	33d	62	10
6th	76	9	34th	62	9
7th	61	8	35th	71	3
8th	67	6	36th	90	5
9th	54	7	37th	76	6
10th	53	8	38th	89	7
11th	64	11	39th	84	10
12th	63	7	40th	53	12
13th	58	11	41st	53	9
14th	58	9	42d	45	10
15th	60	10	43d	57	5
16th	56	9	44th	73	11
17th	56	9	45th	62	13
18th	60	9	46th	60	9
19th	61	7	47th	58	5
20th	45	6	48th	69	12
21st	79	8	49th	71	11
22d	77	9	50th	72	6
23d	86	16	51st	63	8
24th	69	10	52d	55	11
25th	76	11	Last three days of } 36		3
26th	77	11	December . . }		
27th	61	7			
28th	52	12	Total Admissions	3,402	448

*Statement of Weekly Admissions and Deaths in the Fever Hospital of Glasgow, during the Year 1841.*

Admitted.		Died.	Admitted.		Died.
1st week of said year,	37	4	17th week of said year,	60	6
2d	61	9	18th	57	9
3d	82	10	19th	53	5
4th	90	11	20th	43	7
5th	61	16	21st	47	11
6th	49	7	22d	56	4
7th	66	5	23d	50	4
8th	71	9	24th	46	8
9th	98	9	25th	54	7
10th	56	8	26th	57	7
11th	56	8	27th	49	5
12th	59	3	28th	36	3
13th	51	6	29th	24	4
14th	55	5			
15th	56	5			
16th	44	6			
				1,624	201

The deaths from fever are stated in the Glasgow Mortality Bills for 1840 at 1,229, being an increase of 690 *over* 1839. Dr. Cowan, to whom I am indebted for the above table, adds, "It is impossible to ascertain the precise rate of mortality from fever in 1840. It was greater than in 1839, when I assumed it at 1 in 15. Take it at 1 in 12, and the total number affected with fever in Glasgow in 1840 will amount to 14,748." And this, it will be observed, was only the third year after the great epidemic of 1837, which affected probably above 25,000 people, and caused 2,180 deaths.

The number of patients in fever admitted into the Royal Infirmary, Edinburgh, during each of the last 9 months, is as follows; and I have added a column of comparison with the average of the 9 preceding years, which was stated in my former paper.

	Admissions.	Deaths.	Average Admissions, (9 Years.)
1840. October . . .	65	8	98·6
November . . .	93	9	121·1
December . . .	135	22	130·6
1841. January . . .	161	24	129·5
February . . .	154	20	90·
March . . .	124	15	93·8
April . . .	107	11	77·8
May . . .	114	20	87·2
June . . .	110	14	79·2

Many of the patients in fever admitted into the infirmary in Edinburgh were in a very destitute state, but in no instance was any part of the cost of their maintenance defrayed by their parishes; and I believe it has scarcely ever happened that the maintenance of their families during their residence in hospital, has been at the expense of parishes.

In Glasgow the burden thus laid on the subscribers to the fever hospital ultimately became intolerable. "During the first 9 months of 1840," says Dr. Cowan, "1850 patients affected with fever had been sent into the fever hospital by the authorities of the city, barony, parish, and parish of Gorbals, beyond their purchased right, transferring the burden of treatment and maintenance from the poor rates to the voluntary subscribers to the hospital. Since the 1st of October, no patients were admitted, recommended by these parties, unless 15s. were paid for each from the poor's rates or police funds. This regulation must have had an effect in diminishing the number admitted into the hospital."

These facts show how small a portion, even of that destitution which is connected with contagious fever, has yet been admitted to the benefits of the parochial funds in Scotland, and therefore how fallacious any details as to *pauperism* must be, in enabling us to judge of the *extent of suffering* among the people.

In Dundee, on the other hand, I am happy to perceive, by a Report with which I have been favoured by Dr. Arrot, physician to the Royal Infirmary there, that fever has been less prevalent during the last twelvemonth, than for eight years past, the whole number of fever patients admitted there during that time having been only 183, whereas in the year ending 31st May, 1840, it was 575. It is also satisfactory to observe from this Report at Dundee, that "the abuse of spirituous liquors, at once the cause and consequence of destitution, is now less prevalent than formerly." And although various causes have no doubt contributed to the improvement observed in both these respects, yet I cannot help expressing the satisfaction I feel at observing that this im-

provement has been coincident, *first* with an avowal of the principle, that a small number “ of sick is an indication of comfort, and a large number an equally sure indication of want and misery among the lower classes,”\* and *secondly* with a practical recognition of the truth, which I confidently maintain must be admitted and acted upon before there can be any material amelioration of the condition of the poor in Scotland; that the funds legally applicable for their relief must be very considerably increased, and their application more carefully regulated. For at the last annual meeting of the Heritors and Kirk Session of Dundee, for imposing an assessment for the poor, the managers of the poor demanded an assessment exceeding that of the former year by 25 per cent; and the meeting were so convinced of the propriety of the demand, that they voted an assessment of 500*l.* beyond what had been asked, at the same time very judiciously directing that two additional relieving officers should be appointed, in order that the additional provision made for the poor should be accompanied by a more effectual inspection of their habits and conduct.

I formerly stated, that we must wait till the present year, in order to have accurate information as to the mortality in the great towns in Scotland; but that I believed the mortality in Edinburgh for 1837 and 1838, as compared with the census of 1831, viz. 1 in 25·7, and 1 in 30·2, to be nearer the truth than that similarly obtained in any of the English towns, with which the tables of the Registrar-general enabled us to compare it, because I believed the population in Edinburgh to have made less progress since that time. This conjecture is fully borne out by the census of 1841, which shows, that between 1831 and 1841, the population of Edinburgh, including the West Church and Canongate, had only increased from 136,280 to 137,172: and therefore that the 5,300 deaths in 1837, and 4,512 in 1838, must have constituted a mortality of about 1 in 25·8 in the former year, and 1 in 30·3 in the latter. This makes it, as I think, quite certain, that in the ancient and extended royalty, where the elements of mortality are certainly greater than in the West Church and Canongate, the mortality in 1837 must have been as high as I formerly stated it, viz. 1 in 24.

According to a statement with which I have been favoured by Mr. Rawson, of the official returns of the census of 1841, in London, Manchester, and Liverpool, it appears that the increase of the population in these towns since 1831, has been 17·5 per cent., 30 per cent., and 42 per cent., respectively; and supposing this increase to have gone on uniformly during the intervening years, the true mortality in these towns in the years to which I have referred, will have been as follows:—

London . .	1837-8 .	1 in 32·8
	1838-9 .	1 in 38·2
Manchester .	1837-8 .	1 in 33·3
	1838-9 .	1 in 30·9
Liverpool .	1837-8 .	1 in 30·2
	1838-9 .	1 in 32·4

The mortality of 1837 in Edinburgh thus appears to have exceeded the highest mortality of any year in London, by 21 per cent., in Manchester by above 16 per cent., and in Liverpool by 14 per cent. The excess over the mortality of Birmingham and Leeds is still greater. The mortality in Edinburgh may be here a little overstated in conse-

\* Report of Dundee Royal Infirmary, 1841, p. 2.



quence of the population of the castle and of a part of the parish of South Leith adjoining Edinburgh, not having been included in the census of the population; but, making allowance for this, the mortality of 1837 will still be very nearly 1 in 26.

In regard to Glasgow we have accurate information, from the calculations of Mr. Watt, founded on the census of 1841.—(See Report on the Local Census of Lanarkshire, p. 9.) From these it appears,

1. That the average annual number of deaths in the whole town and suburbs (excluding still-born and premature births) in the five years ending 1840 was 1 in 30·41.

2. That in 1837 the mortality was 1 in 24·05.

3. That the annual average mortality in the five years ending 1840, as compared with the population of 1841, was 1 in 33·59, or 2·97 per cent.

4. That the annual average mortality in the five years ending 1830, as compared with the population of 1831, was 1 in 41·74, or 2·39 per cent.; showing an increase of the mortality of the city and suburbs from 2·39 to 2·97, or almost exactly 25 per cent. This result, it will be observed, extends to two periods of five years each, and to more than one-tenth of the population of Scotland.

The immediate causes of this greatly increased mortality are generally allowed to be two—the increased crowding of the town, and the prevalence of epidemic fever. From a Report on the late census, made to the Lord Provost by Mr. Strang, chamberlain of Glasgow, (19th July, 1841,) it appears that in the most densely peopled part of the town (Blackfriar's parish) the population since 1831 has increased 40 per cent., while the number of inhabited houses has not increased at all; and again, in the Gorbals, “there is an increase in the population of 20 per cent. since 1831, though no new buildings have been erected, and where the great majority of the houses are of the smallest class.”—(Watt's Report, p. 11.)

Again, “the mortality from epidemic fever during the whole five years ending 1840 was nearly 12 per cent. of the whole mortality; in 1837 it was 20 per cent.; and in 1840 nearly 14 per cent.”—(Id. p. 11.)

Now for this crowding of the population in the most unhealthy part of Glasgow, and for the extension of epidemic fever among them, according to the statement of one of the most experienced and intelligent observers, (the late Dr. Cowan,) there is one simple cause, infinitely outweighing all others, viz. *destitution*: “The poorest people have no choice of a locality; their state of destitution ties them firmly to one; and the increasing amount of destitution is annually adding to the density of the population in the most densely peopled districts.”—(Journal of the Statistical Society of London, vol. iii. p. 288.) And again; “The prevalence of epidemic diseases depends on various causes, but the most influential of all is poverty and destitution. In every one of the epidemic fevers which have ravaged Glasgow, the progress has been slow, unless extreme destitution has existed.”—(Id. p. id.)

From the result of the census, and from the bills of mortality in Dundee, with which I have been favoured by Dr. Davidson, it appears that the population there increased from 45,355 in 1831, to 64,232 in 1841; the difference being 18,887, or an increase at the rate of 1,887 per annum. Supposing this increase to have gone on uniformly, the population in 1836 would be 54,790, and, in 1837, 56,677; and the

number of deaths were in 1836, 1,923 ; and in 1837, 1,963 : showing a mortality of 27·4 in the former, and 28·8 in the latter of these two years, being those when the epidemic fever was the most prevalent there ; a mortality, I believe, greatly above that which has lately occurred in any English town of the same population. It is to be remembered that these numbers, both as to Glasgow and Dundee, relate to towns rapidly increasing in numbers by *immigration*, *i. e.* by the accession of fresh inhabitants, most of whom come in the vigour of life, or at a time of life when the mortality among them is small ; a fact which always makes the unhealthiness of rapidly increasing communities appear from the bills of mortality to be less than it really is.

I believe the opinion generally prevalent hitherto in England as to the Scotch system of management of the poor, has been that it is an important experiment, as showing *how much comfort* may be secured to the poor with very little assistance from the rich ; but I apprehend that any one who examines the details that have now been produced on the subject, must admit that its practical result is better described by styling it an experiment to prove, how little of comfort or enjoyment is compatible with the preservation of human life ; and what are the results to the body politic, to be expected from a large proportion of the people living habitually under such privations.

But I am anxious to demonstrate a little farther, the great excess of destitution over pauperism in Scotland ; and this I can do in reference to the suburbs of Glasgow from the schedules of the enumerators employed in the recent census, who undertook, under the able direction of Mr. Watt, to mark all the cases of obvious destitution which came under their observation, distinguishing those who had, from those who had not, parochial relief. The numbers of destitute persons, or heads of families in these districts were as follows :—

#### Calton.

Paupers.		Destitute without Parochial Relief.	
Males . .	48		120
Females . .	132		130
Total . .	180		250

#### Bridgeton.

Paupers.		Destitute without Parochial Relief.	
Males . .	11		19
Females . .	39		64
Total . .	50		83

#### Other Suburbs of Glasgow.

Paupers.		Destitute without Parochial Relief.	
Males . .	68		89
Females . .	165		271
Total . .	233		360

See Report of the Local Census of Lanarkshire, by Alexander Watt, Esq., Table VII. p. 13.

In Edinburgh some similar information was obtained at the time of

the census, but not of sufficient extent to be of much value. I have, however, prevailed on several gentlemen, particularly Mr. Tait, Surgeon and Commissioner of Police, and the Rev. Mr. Craigie, missionary, to examine and record the cases of destitution observed in several districts of the town; and I can state from the returns received from these gentlemen, and from some of the enumerators of the census, and from cases which have come under my own repeated observation, the following particulars as to 333 cases of obvious destitution, taken indiscriminately in different parts of the town, all visited at home, excluding persons living professedly by immoral practices.

Paupers, Individuals, or  
Heads of Families.  
121

Destitute Persons or Families  
without Parochial Relief.  
212\*

The highest relief given to any of the paupers is 2s. 6d. a-week, and this in the case of a woman nearly blind, with four young children, The ordinary rate to a woman with three young children is 1s. 6d. a-week. A widow with one child, although at the breast, receives nothing; many aged and disabled women receive only 9d. a-week.

Of those receiving no parochial relief, 56 are persons out of employment, 86 are persons disabled for work, by age or disease, 38 are widows with young families; and 32 are women with families, deserted by their husbands; whereas among all the paupers of the Edinburgh Charity workhouse (1,386) there are only 5 recorded as "deserted." I would call particular attention to this last fact, as confirming the statement I formerly made, that the greater number of those who desert their families in Scotland, do so in the knowledge that they leave them to beggary, and can have no expectation of their being made paupers.

Of the 333 destitute persons, 288 can read, and many of them have received a good education.

The next point to which I would direct attention, as a natural consequence of the absence or inefficiency of any legal provision against destitution, is the amount of burden which is thus thrown on the lower and middling ranks of society, and its effect as a direct *tax upon industry*. This is a point which obviously admits of statistical proof, and demands the more attention, as the injurious effect of assessments on the industrious part of the community, has been the theme of much declamation. But if it be true, that population makes most rapid progress where there is no effective provision against destitution,—and if it be true also, that in such a country the relief of destitution (never altogether withheld) is afforded chiefly, in some instances almost entirely, by the industrious classes,—whereas a well-managed assessment falls chiefly on the proprietor and the capitalist,—it is sufficiently obvious in which case the *tax upon industry* is the most direct and oppressive.

Both these points have been fully proved in reference to Ireland, by Dr. Doyle and others, and they are illustrated, especially by the recent history of the Highlands and Islands. Different causes have no doubt been concerned in producing the excessive population there existing; and

\* Mr. Tait informs us that he has since extended his researches, and finds "150 families who may be said to be absolutely destitute, and 200 more whose income is insufficient for their support, making in all 350, of whom only 47 receive parish aid"



there is a difference of opinion even among practical observers, as to the influence of each ; some attribute the evil chiefly to the kelp manufacture and its failure, while others maintain, apparently on good grounds, that in certain districts at least, the kelp has had very little to do with the matter ;\* some ascribe the excessive population to the practice of sub-letting farms, while others assert that this practice was adopted as a means of providing for an excessive population already existing.† But there is no difference of opinion on the facts which concern us in the present inquiry. 1. It is certain that this excessive and still increasing population is coincident with, and is not in the least checked by, an extremely destitute, and, because destitute, degraded state of the lowest people ; and I formerly endeavoured to shew that the experience of many nations, and the observation of the uniform tendency of human conduct in these circumstances, authorize the belief that this destitution and degradation are mainly instrumental in keeping up the redundant population. 2. It is equally certain, that as there is no compulsion on the proprietors in the absence of assessments, so also there is no regular or uniform exertion, and in many instances, hardly any exertion at all, made by them for the relief of this destitution ; the burden of which falls therefore chiefly, and in some places almost exclusively, on the industrious classes. The Rev. Dr. M'Leod, for example, certainly a witness who has no prejudice *against* the proprietors, when asked whether the absentee proprietors contribute in proportion to their means, to the relief of the distress on their properties, answers, “ No, I will not say that they do.” But indeed it is explicitly avowed, by all who defend the present system of management of the poor in the highlands, that in so far as the destitution there is relieved, and the people preserved from starvation, it is done by the industrious classes ; and the great object of the proprietors and their agents, in opposing any assessments seems to be, to prevent any obstruction to this continual flow of charitable aid from these classes to their poorer neighbours ; they seem to regard this application of a large portion of the fruits of the industry of those people, as a wholesome exercise of Christian virtue, with which it would be quite improper to interfere by making any other provision for the destitute. Thus, Mr. M'Kenzie says, “ I do not think if there were a poor assessment, the poor would be so well off as they are now ; for the people (*i. e. the labouring people*) give them meal, potatoes, and plenty of fish ; *everything which they have, they divide with them.*”—(Second Report, p. 35.)

But as I think it can scarcely be maintained, that the duty of the rich to the poor is performed by merely witnessing and applauding their charitable acts to one another, and refraining from all such interference as would supersede the necessity of such acts of kindness, so I apprehend the existence of these virtues among the lower orders cannot be regarded as a sufficient reason for exempting the higher orders from the duty of “ opening wide their hands unto their poor brethren,” in the manner which the experience of other nations shews to be most effectual for their relief.

Of the actual condition of the poor on the non-assessed estates of absentee landlords in the highlands and islands, of their excessive numbers, of the manner in which they are preserved from starvation, and of their

\* Evidence of M. M'Kenzie, Esq., 2d Report of Committee on Highland Emigration, p. 22.

† Evidence of the Duke of Argyll, 2d Report, p. 35.

despondency and improvidence,—the natural consequences of their comfortless condition,—the following short extracts from letters written by correspondents of Robert Stevenson, Esq., Engineer, and with which he has favoured me, afford some information. The first is from Mr. John Reid, principal lighthouse keeper at Barra head.

“The general wants of the people in Barra are the want of employment,—the want of capital to give them the means of fishing, and the high rent of lands. More than a hundred families in Barra have no visible means of living; they eke out their subsistence by leave given by some of those who hold lands, to till a part of them for potatoes; and if this crop fails, *they share here and there where a potato can be got*. Those who have boats to fish generally distribute the heads of the fish to the poorer as a help to their food. The wretched state of their bed-clothes and bodily clothing has gradually increased since they were deprived of the liberty of having sheep; their beds are not so good as many beasts have,—a few bundles of grass or weeds, with a blanket; many never take off their clothes but when wet. Two years ago, a man and wife and five children came here to seek their subsistence from the birds on the rocks. A few sticks, an old chest, a pot, and one blanket formed their stock; soon we *and the tenants had to keep them alive*, or they must have died;—next year he planted some potatoes, and so continued. In every island there are some such, and many on the main land. Thus few are above want, *and those made to live hardly enough, giving to the distressed every day*. As to parish relief, all are so poor that there are none to contribute; no collection is gathered at the church nor has any church relief been had in these times of want.”

“The people are intemperate; having no comfort in a home, drink is their only enjoyment; if they had substance, they know that as they are indebted to the landlord, to him it must go; until they acquire some property, they will never be careful, and *never provide for to-morrow*. Diseases prevail much among them—typhus fever has been again this spring in South Uist. Two in one house died there the day I was there, and many are ill. They do not rely on themselves for the wants of life, but *look to others to relieve them when necessity calls them to ask*. *I have found many of them in this belief*. They press each their claim, not considering the hardship on the giver, *to share with so many needy persons the hard-earned overplus above his own necessities*.”

The next is from Lewis M'Ivor, Esq., merchant, Stornoway.

“In the town and parish of Stornoway there are several hundreds in want,—many whose food is scanty and precarious, and *who could not live but for the aid given them* from time to time by the few well-disposed people who can give them meal on credit or in charity. I think the poverty is not caused by intemperance, but principally by want of employment, and constant shifting of the poor people from farm to farm in this unfortunate island. There are many labourers idle from want of employment,—many that can get no work for half the year. There are many widows with large families, principally sailor's widows whose husbands have been drowned, and many poor old maids. *The poor draw their support from going round their parishes three or four times a year*,—they get a portion of meal in each family, and there is no instance of actual starvation, as the people are most charitable. There are about 250 on the poor's-roll, who get *from 1s 6d. to 3s. 6d. each in the year*.” Thus their dependence must be almost exclusively on

this organized mendicity among the industrious inhabitants. In fact, this miserable and comfortless population, which has grown up in the absence of assessments, and in the absence often of almost any assistance from the proprietors of the land, has now so burdened the tenantry as to threaten a more complete though indirect absorption of the rent of the soil, than resulted from the poor-rates under the old system in any part of England, which supported the population there in a very different degree of comfort.

The following is from Mr. D. L. Campbell, surgeon, and relates to the condition and habits of the poor in the island of Tyree.

*“Distribution of the funds of the Kirk Session in the last three years :—*

Years.	No. of Paupers.	Sum distributed.		
		£.	s.	d.
1839	65	25	9	0
1840	65	22	14	6
1841	79	21	9	6

“The last census gives a population of 5000, which is at the rate of 110 persons to the square mile, and this is a great deal more than the island can support. Emigration might prove a temporary cure, but the habits of the people must be improved before any permanent circumscription of the population within proper limits can be looked for. The great cause of pauperism is *the custom of marrying young*. A man no sooner reaches the age of 20 than he gets married. The rent is in a great measure paid by the grain they can raise, or the beasts they can rear, and what they subsist on it is difficult to say. A crofter at Bala-phim, with six children, has not been able to go to church since he married for want of clothes, and has been without bedclothes for years, as he declared to the factor and others lately. I may mention also the case of a blind widow with three children, *supported by the charity of the workmen* and others employed by the Commissioners here. Much to the credit of the masons, a society has been formed among them for educating destitute children, and *I may add for feeding them also*. Were it not indeed for the charity of the few who are able to give some scraps of meat and clothes, many of the people would be in a state of nudity and famine. These facts you may depend on. I have been cautious not to believe everything told me. The country is in a fearful state of destitution; and should an inquiry be instituted many almost incredible things will be brought to light.”

But in all parts of Scotland, the inequality of the burden imposed by the poor, on the profits of industry, and on income arising from land or capital, is more or less obvious.

Thus, Mr. Stewart, after stating the inadequacy of the parochial relief at Lockerby, says, “It often, very often happens that their relief may come only from some next door neighbour, whose sympathy may be sincere, but whose means may only allow of their affording such aid as may save from starvation.”

Mr. Anderson states at Inverness—“But for the known liberality and charity of *their poor neighbours, a little easier in circumstances than themselves*, the situation of the indigent poor here would often be most deplorable.”

Mr. Scott states at Peterhead that “the chief resource of the indi-



gent poor is a sum of about 500*l.* a-year, levied chiefly (by mendicity) *from the industrious part of the community*, and to which *many of the principal holders of property contribute little or nothing.*" (Remarks, &c., p. 36.) Again, as to the "principal source of the revenue of the kirk session, the collections made at the established churches, amounting to nearly 200*l.* per annum," Mr. Scott observes, that "it is contributed chiefly in half-pence," and "it is notorious that the landed proprietor, substantial farmer, shopkeeper, or master tradesman, gives in general just the *same sum, one halfpenny, as the poorest servant or labourer.*" (p. 31.) Besides these sources of relief to the poor, (amounting to 700*l.* a-year,) he enumerates the Pauper Lunatic Asylum and Orphan Fund, raised by the congregations, and the Female Society and Coal Fund raised by voluntary subscription, which together amount to above 150*l.*, besides allowances to some of the poor from Friendly Societies formed amongst themselves, and from the Trinity House and Merchant Seamen's Fund,—and as the whole sum available for the poor, excluding their earnings, is not more than 950*l.*, it is obvious that nearly the whole of this sum is accounted for, without assistance from any but the industrious classes of the community. (See his calculations at p. 28, and seq.) It is therefore not surprising that we should find in this author the following observation, in accordance with one I formerly quoted from the late Rev. Dr. Andrew Thomson. "It is a fact which has frequently fallen under the notice of the present writer, that there does exist, among the middle and lower classes, a very general feeling of dissatisfaction, approaching to envy or jealousy, not unnaturally excited by observing many among the more wealthy members of the community, exempted from bearing their due share in the maintenance and relief of the poor, and availing themselves of this exemption." (p. 17.) And he seems justified in his practical conclusion, that by "prudent arrangement and careful management, *adequate provision* may be made for the destitute at Peterhead, without imposing on the *industrious part of the community* a greater burden than they at present bear, provided that *other parties*, bound not only in law, but in justice, shall be brought to bear their due proportion." (p. 23.)

Nor is the burden of the maintenance of the poor in Scotland thrown on the industry of their own countrymen exclusively. The following extract from a letter, with which I have been favoured by Dr. Brown, of Sunderland, shows that it presses to some extent on our neighbours on the other side of the border.

The number of "tramps," *i.e.* beggars and vagrants, brought before the Bench in Sunderland in 1840, many of whom were heads of families, was—

English.  
80

Irish.  
66

Scotch.  
69

Dr. Brown adds,—“Before I read your work, I was struck with the very large proportion of ‘tramps’ from a country so well regulated as Scotland has generally represented herself to be, brought before the Bench of which I am a member. As to the number of English, it is to be observed, that our commercial relations with various parts of England exceed by a hundred fold those from Scotland; and, moreover, that the English charged with begging are in many instances residents in the town and neighbourhood, who either prefer casual charity to parochial relief, or receiving this, beg without absolute necessity. The

Irish are in many instances wandering in search of work ; but it has appeared to me that the vagrants from Scotland have not worn the appearance of persons in search of employment, but have been the aged and infirm, who in England would have been objects of parochial relief."

Again, it will be remembered that Dr. Chalmers has repeatedly stated, that his principal reliance for the support of the poor, in all cases where the assessments are avoided in Scotland, is on the fund *ab intra*, *i. e.* the contributions of the poor to one another ; in which case of course, the maintenance of the poor is chiefly provided for by a direct tax on the industry of the working classes.

Another consequence of the present system in Scotland, which I formerly endeavoured to illustrate statistically is, the excessive accumulation of people, able-bodied and partially disabled, which takes place in certain districts, where there is a variable and precarious demand for their industry, and where charitable associations exist. This takes place chiefly in towns, but occasionally also in other districts, and is always referable to the same cause, the deficiency of provision for them when unemployed or partially disabled, in the places where they were born or have settled. Thus, the Report of the Committee of the House of Commons on Highland Emigration, states it as one result of their inquiries, that the deplorably redundant population along the west coast of the highlands, was " farther maintained, and its tendency to increase confirmed by the consolidation of farms in the interior of the country, which had the effect of removing the people from the glens to the coast, where they found it more easy to obtain subsistence either by fishing or the manufacture of kelp." Thus the maritime districts became overburdened with partially employed stranger poor, and when these means of precarious employment failed, had no power to relieve themselves, and equalize the burden over the country, as may be done where a well managed and efficient legal provision exists.

It has been stated, I think with perfect justice, that the parish which in equity should be bound to support the poor when they become destitute, is that which has profited most by their labour, or, in case of women and children, by the labour of their husbands or fathers ; and there is so much statistical evidence in my former papers, and in the reports of the Association on Pauperism in Edinburgh, to prove that the large towns in Scotland are burdened with poor much beyond what this principle will justify, that I shall only add here, in continuation of it, a very few documents.

" Of 259 applicants for legal relief at Peterhead, 112 are natives of the parish, and the remaining 147 have acquired a claim in virtue of their own residence, or that of their relatives, *frequently very little exceeding the period (of three years) required by law.*" (Scott, p. 25.)

Of 499 examined, and admitted on the roll at Inverness,

The natives of the town and parish were	179
Not natives, but 30 years resident . . .	164
From 10 to 30 years resident . . .	112
From 3 to 10 years resident . . .	39
Doubtful cases . . . . .	5

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499\*

\* Appendix to Mr. Anderson's Report above quoted.

The proportion of admitted paupers of short residence is here less than had been anticipated at Inverness; but it is to be observed that this town is not assessed, and that the main reason of the disinclination to the assessment, notwithstanding the miserable condition of the poor, is the conviction that assessment would lead to a rapid influx of poor from the surrounding districts. (See Evidence of Rev. W. M'Pherson.)

That such influx has taken place to a great extent at Aberdeen, is unequivocally shown by documents formerly quoted, and by the following Table, drawn up from lists with which I was favoured by Baillie Forbes:—

Whole number on the roll	.	1612
Born in Aberdeen	.	452
Born elsewhere	.	1160
		1612

Two documents from Glasgow, dated in the present year, illustrate the same point:—

1. From a Return, transmitted by Captain Miller to the Association, of the circumstances of 455 weavers out of employment in Glasgow in June, 1841, it appears, that the heads of families born in Glasgow were only 120 out of the 455; and further, that of 1851 children in these families only 430 were born in Glasgow, showing that most of these families had but recently settled there.

2. The Report of the Directors of the Night Asylum at Glasgow for 1841 contains the following passage:—"By reference to Table A it will be seen, that 3,035 have been received from Glasgow and suburbs, and 6,525 from other parts. In 1840 these numbers were 2,440 from Glasgow, and 6,752 from other parts (whereof 4,714 from other parts of Scotland, 2,038 from England and Ireland). This simple statement shows how much the inhabitants of Glasgow have to provide for the support of the poor of other districts; and, in the opinion of the directors, is additional evidence that legislative or other measures should be taken to induce every locality to support in an efficient manner its own poor."—(Report, p. 8.)

I think there is comparatively little objection made in Scotland to a more uniform and effectual legal provision being made for the aged and disabled poor; although it is strongly, and I think justly felt in towns, that measures for this purpose adopted in them, would soon entail on them an unequal and excessive burden, if not attended by a modification of the law in two particulars,—*first*, an extension of the term of years required for obtaining a settlement; and *secondly*, a power of enforcing the law in all parts of the country, as to adequate relief to aged and disabled persons, to be lodged in the Sheriff Courts; instead of the decisions of the Kirk Sessions and managers of the poor being, as at present, liable to review only in the distant, and for practical purposes, inaccessible Court of Session. But more difficulty is felt as to the expediency of granting a right of relief to persons destitute only from want of employment; and it is sufficiently obvious that this kind of relief requires to be more carefully guarded against abuse than any other. But that it may be so guarded by aid of the experience of other countries, for example, of the northern parts of England, where the Poor Laws were never abused, seems to me quite certain; and I shall conclude this



paper with stating the principal social evils, (all of them capable of statistical proof, but some of which would require more copious illustration,) which I think necessarily result from the absence of such provision. These evils (as I think) make any legal provision against destitution which shall exclude the influence of this cause, really ineffectual for the beneficial purposes which such provision is fitted to secure.

1. So large a portion of the destitution now existing in Scotland, or I believe in any long inhabited country, especially where there are great manufactories, arises from this cause, that unless the legal provision include this portion, it leaves great masses of misery unrelieved; and experience shews that there is no security for the unhappy condition of these persons attracting the attention of those who have the means of relieving them until, as Dr. Sym expresses it, "their distress can be endured no longer."

2. By the frequent recurrence of this kind of distress, numerous families are degraded, and the children brought up in that state of abject destitution, of which the experience of all nations shews the natural consequence to be—the absence of prudence and foresight, early marriages, and a morbidly redundant population, extending and perpetuating the evil; of which the present condition of the Irish and Highland peasantry, and of the Glasgow hand-loom weavers, are memorable examples. Thus the families of 455 unemployed and very destitute weavers, reported to the association at Edinburgh by Captain Miller at Glasgow, consist of 1,851 children.

Two facts noticed by Dr. Sym at Ayr, strikingly illustrate the degradation of labouring families which is the inevitable result of unrelieved distress from want of employment, and which, if the principle above-stated be true, is the inevitable cause of farther destitution and suffering. The first is, the extent to which the business of pawnbrokers is increased, "when the industrious poor are reduced to temporary difficulties. One of these pawnbrokers informs me that he has nearly 4000 transactions during each of the winter months, and that not more than 1 or 2 per cent. of the pledges are left unredeemed, *except during severe and protracted depressions of trade*. This shews that most of his customers are industrious people, labouring under temporary difficulties;"\* but when these difficulties are more permanent than usual, and the pledges are left unredeemed, then begin the destitution and degradation of their families; not to be remedied, as the same author observes, *merely* "by impressing on their minds the importance of sobriety, industry, cleanliness and piety."

Again, Dr. Sym remarks, "The hand-loom weavers ought not to bring up their children to the loom, now that the extensive introduction of machinery has reduced that trade to its lowest ebb. It is the poverty of the parents that obliges them to employ their sons in weaving as early as their strength will permit, and the practice cannot easily be checked without either improving the circumstances of the parents, or giving the children some other profitable employment."†

3. Another consequence of the unemployed labourer having no resource, is, that he is often compelled to submit to such terms as his employers may dictate, and hence another cause of degradation, injurious

\* Sanatory Report on Ayr, p. 11.

† Ibid. p. 19.

not merely to himself, but to his country. The system of *bondaging*, which has become very general in some of the agricultural districts of Scotland was described to me by the late Rev. Mr. Harkness of Fala, as “a species of domestic slavery,” to which the field labourers are compelled to submit, by the knowledge that when thrown out of employment, they have no resource but beggary. “A woman’s wages are 9d. a-day when employed the whole day, but in winter they are generally engaged at 1d. the hour, and are seldom employed more than 5 or 6 hours. For 6 or 7 weeks during winter the bondagers and day labourers are not employed at all; but the condition on which they hold their houses requires them to be always ready when called upon, to work either by the day or hour, according to the pleasure of their masters. They cannot engage in any labour which may prevent their being ready at any hour they may be required, without forfeiting their houses.” “I know nothing that bears so hard on the labouring classes as this system; it has brought many of them to ruin and hopeless destitution,”

He adds, I think quite justly, “It is the low standard of comfort and enjoyment to which the labouring class is now reduced, that renders the management of paupers a matter of extreme difficulty.”

4. In other circumstances the absence of any protection against destitution, induces the labourers to form combinations for keeping up the rate of wages, more general and more formidable, I believe, with us, than in any countries where an effective provision for *bonâ fide* unemployed labourers exists.

5. Another very frequent consequence of this state of things is, that men are obliged to “wander in search of work,” without any definite object, and first leave and then desert their families, as these irregular and desultory habits become predominant.

6. Lastly, in regard to the excessive extension of epidemic diseases, particularly fever, I think it sufficiently established by the facts to which I have above referred, that it is the destitute condition of the unemployed poor, which especially favours this scourge of humanity; and that any legal provision which should be confined to the aged and disabled, would leave this evil nearly untouched.

For all these social evils, I humbly apprehend that whatever other remedies are applied, one is essential, viz. *protection against destitution*. I do not indeed suppose that this can be given with absolute certainty to the whole people in any country, nor that occasional extraordinary aid to the destitute poor will not be required, particularly in manufacturing districts, under any system of provision against their usual or average degree of suffering; but I confidently maintain that such protection is much more generally and effectually given in England, Holland, and Germany, under the operation of an effective but regulated legal provision for the poor, than in Scotland; and that all suppositions of the benefits derived from the absence of it in Scotland, either as regards the numbers of the people, or their comforts, or their moral character, are wholly without foundation. And unless it be thought wise that the poor of Scotland should be regarded as a separate *caste*, not entitled to the consideration and protection from the legislature which is given to the native poor of England, I may perhaps be permitted to express the hope that a sufficient ground has been laid for a farther and more authoritative inquiry into the accuracy of these statements.





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